

## Guidance for SRGs on Incorporating Gender as a Cross-cutting Concept

### Background

The “Guidance for Technical Subject-Matter Experts (SMEs) on Re-Engineering Foreign Assistance Indicators” tasks all SRGs and associated SMEs with taking gender issues into consideration as a cross-cutting issue when developing indicators in all sectors under the F framework. This means not only designing indicators that can be disaggregated by sex but also designing indicators that are gender-sensitive (see definition below).

Developing gender-sensitive indicators is also in line with USAID ADS guidelines as reflected in Section 203.3.3.3:

**\*MANDATORY.** In order to ensure that USAID assistance makes the optimal contribution to gender equality, performance management systems and evaluations must include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data when the technical analyses supporting an AO, project, or activity demonstrates that:

- a. The different roles and status of women and men within the community, political sphere, workplace, and household (for example, roles in decision-making and different access to and control over resources and services) that affect the activities to be undertaken; and
- b. The anticipated results of the work that would affect women and men differently.

### What are Gender-Sensitive Indicators?

The ADS distinguishes between gender-sensitive indicator and sex-disaggregated data. Gender-sensitive indicators point out gender-related changes in society. They demonstrate changes in the status and roles of women and men over time, which can be used to measure whether outcomes related to gender equality are being achieved. Sex-disaggregated data are data that have been calculated and reported separately into two different categories: male or female. Collecting sex-disaggregated data is essential for constructing gender sensitive indicators but alone is not sufficient since reporting on the number of men and women who participate in activities does not provide enough information on whether the conditions that inhibit gender equality have been changed or improved.

Two subsets of gender-sensitive indicators are indicators that measure *gender equality* and *women’s empowerment*. Like many other indicators, there are no universally agreed upon definitions but the core of each concept is the following:

**GENDER EQUALITY** refers to a situation where women and men have equal conditions for realizing their full human rights and potential; are able to contribute equally to national political, economic, social and cultural development; and benefit equally from the results.<sup>1</sup> Gender equality entails that the underlying causes of discrimination are systematically identified and

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<sup>1</sup> This is a somewhat different definition than that used in the ADS. The ADS defines gender equality as “a broad concept and a goal for development. It is achieved when men and women have equal rights, freedoms, conditions, and opportunities for realizing their full potential and for contributing to and benefiting from economic, social, cultural, and political development. It means society values men and women equally for their similarities and the diverse roles they play. It signifies the outcomes that result from gender equity strategies and processes.”

removed in order to give women and men equal opportunities. The concept of gender equality used by many donors takes into account women's existing subordinate positions within social relations and aims at restructuring societies so as to eradicate gender hierarchies. Equality is therefore understood to include both formal equality and substantive equality.<sup>2</sup>

**WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT** is a process that marks change over a period of time and requires that the individual being empowered is involved as a significant agent in that change process. Experts agree that an empowered woman is one who has the agency to formulate strategic choices and to control resources and decisions that affect important life outcomes (Kabeer 1999). Empowerment can occur at a number of different levels, to cover a range of different dimensions and to materialize through a variety of different processes.

These definitions do not translate easily into measurement. Many institutions simply disaggregate data or report numbers separately for men and women. This is the most basic type of indicator but gender equality disparities can also be measured in other, more sophisticated ways, including ratios, absolute gaps, and relative gaps.

- Ratios are common for tracking outcome measures. For instance, in MDG tracking a common approach is to construct a ratio of female to male achievement (which can be termed a "gender parity index" or GPI). Take education as an example. Gender parity indexes can be computed for enrollment rates, completion rates, literacy rates, numeracy rates, and so forth. The GPI of gross enrollment rates is calculated by dividing the female gross enrollment rate by the male gross enrollment rate for a given level of education. A GPI of one indicates parity between the sexes. A GPI that varies between zero and one typically means a disparity in favor of males, whereas a GPI greater than one indicates a disparity in favor of females.
- Besides ratios, international organizations also use different gap measures. The absolute gap is the difference between the absolute number of males and females enrolled in school or able to read and write. This would be calculated by subtracting the number of females from the number of males. The relative gap expressed as a percentage is given by the formula  $(F - M)/F \times 100$ . For instance, with respect to literacy rates, the relative gap indicates the proportion of females that should be enrolled or made literate to achieve parity with males.

Of the three types of measures discussed above, international and national institutions seem to prefer ratios to capture gender disparities. Ratios and other relative statistics use the group represented in the denominator (males) as the benchmark against which to judge outcomes.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Achieving substantive equality may mean that women and men cannot be treated the same; for to achieve substantive equality, women and men may need to be treated differently.

<sup>3</sup> Several caveats apply to the use of ratios. First, access to the underlying data is necessary to interpret changes in ratios. Consider the example of changes in the ratio of female-to-male enrollment rates. Increases in female-to-male ratios can result from a fall in male rates with female rates remaining constant, from a decline in both female and male rates with male rates declining faster, or from female rates increasing faster than male rates. Without additional information, the GPI says little about whether improvements in the ratio reflect increases in girls' school enrollment (desirable) or decreases in boys' enrollment (undesirable). It also does not show whether the overall level of participation in education is low or high. Thus, for interpretation, information on the data used to construct the difference measures must be presented.

Neither State nor USAID have yet developed detailed guidance about which gender equality indicators to use in program monitoring and evaluation; we expect this indicator streamlining exercise to help to identify the most important indicators for this purpose. Generally, however, there is consensus that indicators need to show to what extent and in what ways programs or projects have met gender equality objectives in a given sector and/or achieved results related to gender equality. There is also consensus that indicators should measure differences in how women and men have benefitted from or been impacted by a program or project.

Distinct from gender equality indicators are indicators that measure women's empowerment. Because there are several difficulties with measuring women's empowerment, including identifying which domains of empowerment are relevant in different countries and socioeconomic contexts.<sup>4</sup> Foreign assistance programming has tended to use a more limited definition generally involving women's participation in programs and projects.

Most monitoring and evaluation of projects tends to focus on measuring the outputs related to a specific activity. But because gender equality goals are generally longer term and often involve changes in social roles and relationships, it is important that gender-sensitive indicators also measure outcomes, or higher level project results that are related to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Effective gender-sensitive indicators, therefore, measure program outcomes and impacts as well as project outputs.

## Tasks

- SRGs should articulate the over-arching gender goals for each Area and, if possible, for each Element/Sub-Element in which they are tasked with developing indicators.
- Both output and outcome indicators should be designed to capture progress toward these gender-equality and empowerment-related goals.
- At a minimum, sex-disaggregation of all people-level indicators should be considered. However, as much as possible, SRGs are encouraged to go beyond simple sex-disaggregation and to design indicators that are truly gender-sensitive.
- Identify indicators (in addition to those to be disaggregated by sex) considered to be gender-sensitive and note this in the Indicator Reference Sheet—separate guidance will be forthcoming.

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<sup>4</sup> The most frequently used individual-level indicators of empowerment are: 1) decision making over expenditures and resource allocation, social and domestic matters (for example, cooking) and child-related issues (for example, well-being, schooling, health); 2) control over resources (income, assets, unearned income, welfare receipts, household budget, participation in paid employment); and 3) mobility or freedom of movement. Measures of the process of female empowerment are more difficult; most available indicators tend to measure the enabling factors or conditions for empowerment, such as labor force participation, female literacy or school enrollment, and political representation by women (Malhotra, Schuler, and Boender 2002).

- Each SRG will have a designated point of contact from the Gender SRG who can provide input and assistance while developing sectoral indicators.

#### **Illustrative Examples of Gender-Sensitive Outcome Indicators**

- Ratio of female to male net enrollment rate in primary or secondary education
- Ratio of female to male literacy rates in a given age cohort
- Ratio of female to male labor participation rate
- Ratio of women's to men's hourly earnings or average earnings
- Proportion of time used in connection with household activities (collection of water, fuel, food), disaggregated by sex
- Ratio of female to male infant mortality rates
- Percent increase in the extent of political representation of women in Parliament

#### **Illustrative Examples of Gender-Sensitive Output Indicators**

- Number of people using climate information in their decision making as a result of USG assistance, disaggregated by sex
- Numbers of victims of trafficking who receive assistance, disaggregated by sex
- Difference between proportion of girls and boys immunized against certain diseases
- Difference between proportion of women and men receiving food, water, shelter and non-food items in a humanitarian crisis

## **Compendiums of Indicators**

The Gender PoCs may be able to locate additional resources for the SMEs that provide lists of illustrative gender-sensitive indicators in many sectors. Below is a small sample of such resources. The documents that do not have associated links may be obtained from the gender PoCs.

### **General**

- Commonwealth Secretariat. (1999). Using Gender- Sensitive Indicators: A Reference Manual for Governments and Other Stakeholders. By Tony Beck.
- CIDA (1997). Guide to Gender Sensitive Indicators. [http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/inet/images.nsf/vLUIImages/Policy/\\$file/WID-GUID-E.pdf](http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/inet/images.nsf/vLUIImages/Policy/$file/WID-GUID-E.pdf)

### **EG**

- USAID. Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Economic Growth/Trade-Related Activities, [http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf\\_docs/PNADL088.pdf](http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNADL088.pdf). This includes some indicators for the agriculture sector.
- USAID (2009). BizCLIR Gender-Sensitive Economics and Governance Indicators.
- Gender Dimensions of Investment Climate Reform: A Guide for Policy Makers and Practitioners, International Bank for Reconstruction and Development / World Bank (2010).
- [http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/sustainability.nsf/Content/Publications\\_Report\\_GenderDimensionsGuide](http://www.ifc.org/ifcext/sustainability.nsf/Content/Publications_Report_GenderDimensionsGuide). See page 39 for start of discussion of indicators.
- USAID (2009). Promoting Gender Equitable Opportunities in Agricultural Value Chains, page 107. Available at [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/crosscutting\\_programs/wid/pubs/GATE\\_Gender\\_Ag\\_Value\\_Chain\\_Handbook\\_11-09.pdf](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/crosscutting_programs/wid/pubs/GATE_Gender_Ag_Value_Chain_Handbook_11-09.pdf)

### **DG**

- UNDP (2006). Measuring Democratic Governance: a Framework for Selecting Pro-poor and Gender Sensitive Indicators.

### **Health**

- USAID. (2010). Integrating Gender into Health Programs: A Guide to Implementing ADS requirements.

### **TIP**

- IOM. (2008). Handbook of Indicators for Counter-trafficking Projects.

### **Humanitarian Assistance**

- IASC (2007). Gender Handbook on Humanitarian Action <http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/iasc/gender>

- Overview of the IASC Gender Marker and Link to Report and Sector Materials:  
<http://onerresponse.info/crosscutting/gender/Pages/The%20IASC%20Gender%20Marker.aspx>

### **Peace and Security**

- UNSCR 1325 Indicators (see report appendix),  
[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/498](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/2010/498)
- Schmeidl and Piza-Lopez (2002). GENDER AND CONFLICT EARLY WARNING: A FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION (see esp. appendices I-III),  
[http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/INTLALERT\\_genderandconflictearlywarning.pdf](http://www.humansecuritygateway.com/documents/INTLALERT_genderandconflictearlywarning.pdf)
- Gender and SSR Toolkit, DCAF (2008). See especially Tool 11 on SSR Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation and Gender, <http://www.dcaf.ch/Publications/Series/Detail?lng=en&id=47344>